

TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Congestion and travel delay are common concerns when considering highway performance. Congestion can be recurring (commuter traffic, Friday night traffic to tourist destinations), seasonal (foliage viewers heading north), event driven (NASCAR races), or caused by a particular incident (a crash or breakdown).

Traffic congestion in New Hampshire is measured in terms of Level of Service (LOS). There are five categories, A through F. LOS A denotes free flowing, and LOS F means heavily congested. LOS is determined by comparing the volume of traffic on a roadway section to the roadway's capacity to handle the volume (based on traffic engineering procedures outlined in the Highway Capacity Manual). Capacity is based on roadway factors that affect congestion: alignment, lane and shoulder width, the number of access points, and others. To ensure uniformity, the traffic volumes used for comparison purposes are weekday PM peak hour volumes (normally an example of a high recurring peak condition) throughout the state.

The chart below represents the LOS for the major state highways, including state maintained and numbered routes, based on 2006 traffic data.

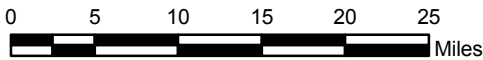
Level of Service Description	Miles	Color
No Congestion (LOS A and B)	1186	Green
Moderate Congestion (LOS C and D)	1235	Yellow
Congested (LOS E and F)	308	Red
Unrated	1869	Black
Total	4,598	

The accompanying Traffic Congestion Map shows a concentration of “congested” highways in the State’s southeasterly and south-central regions. Other routes, particularly those providing primary access to larger population areas, also experience increased traffic congestion.

A number of highway related projects proposed in the Ten Year Plan target this congestion. In addition, a number of non-highway related transportation projects are included to incrementally mitigate congestion and improve mobility to more efficiently move people, goods, and services throughout the state. The NHDOT, in cooperation with the Maine DOT and the Vermont Agency of Transportation leads an effort to implement Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) technologies in the Northern New England region to manage and operate the highways more efficiently, providing timely information to motorists about travel conditions, traffic delays, and tourism opportunities. Such ITS technologies will again assist in addressing congestion. The NHDOT has constructed a traffic operation center within the State’s Emergency Management Center to help monitor traffic congestion and to improve emergency response.

NHDOT's Statewide Transportation Model provides the ability to analyze future traffic flow in the State, and forecast the effectiveness of various transportation alternatives in meeting future traffic demands. As these technologies and alternative opportunities are refined and improved, traffic congestion and highway safety can be addressed more cost effectively as stand alone improvements or as part of solving other highway needs.

CONGESTION



MAP BASED ON 2006 TRAFFIC DATA

CURRENTLY TRAFFIC CONGESTION ON NEW HAMPSHIRE'S HIGHWAYS IS MEASURED BY LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS). LEVEL OF SERVICE INDICATES HOW WELL TRAFFIC FLOWS ALONG THE HIGHWAY SYSTEM. THIS MAP REPRESENTS THE LEVEL OF SERVICE AT PEAK HOUR CONDITIONS.

ALL LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS IS BASED ON CURRENT HIGHWAY CAPACITY MANUAL PROCEDURES, USING 2006 TRAFFIC VOLUME DATA AND ROADWAY GEOMETRICS THAT AFFECT CONGESTION.

- NO CONGESTION (LOS - A & B)
1186 MILES
- MODERATE CONGESTION (LOS - C & D)
1235 MILES
- CONGESTION (LOS - E & F)
308 MILES
- NOT RATED 1869 MILES
- URBAN AREA (2000)

